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By

Eric L. Maldonado

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Attorney Docket No. SCET 18.735 (100809-16268)

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Inventor: T. KUWAHARA  
Serial No.: 09/876,884  
Filed: June 27, 2001  
Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD...  
Examiner: J.C. PWU  
Art Unit: 3628  
Con. No.: 7823

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March 25, 2004

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**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT****S I R:**

In order to comply with discretionary rules 37 CFR §§1.97 and 1.98, attached hereto is a copy of Form PTO-1449 and a copy of the documents listed thereon. This document contains information in which the Examiner may consider to be important in deciding whether to issue a patent in the instant application.

As this statement is being filed prior to issuance of a first Office Action, no fee is due.

Also attached is a copy of the listed document, a Decision of Refusal dated March 9, 2004 from the corresponding Japanese Patent Application, with translation.

For documents written in a language other than English, English language abstracts are annexed thereto explaining relevancy in accordance with 37 CFR §1.98 (a)(3).

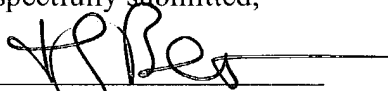
Each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this information disclosure statement.

The present Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in compliance with 37 §CFR 1.56 as an Examiner might consider any cited document important in deciding whether to allow the application to issue as a patent, but the citation of each document is not to be construed as an admission that such document is necessarily relevant or prior art. No representation is intended that the cited documents represent the results of a complete search, and it is anticipated that the Examiner in the normal course of examination, will make an independent search and will determine the best prior art consistent with 37 CFR 1.104 (a), and in the course of such search will review for relevance every document cited on the attached form even if not initialed.

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully solicited.

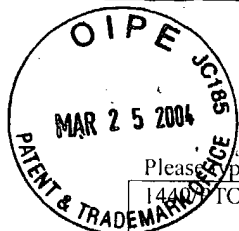
**Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.**

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas J. Bean  
Reg. No. 44,528

**CUSTOMER NO.: 026304**  
(Tel) 212-940-8800  
(Fax) 212-940-8986  
Docket No.: SCET 18.735 (100809-16268)



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14400 TO

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Patent and Trademark Office

Application No. : 09/876,884

Filing Date : June 7, 2001

First Named Inventor: T. KUWAHARA

Group Art Unit : 3628

Examiner Name : J.C. PWU

Attorney Docket No. : SCET 18.735

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE  
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**

Sheet 1 of 1

**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

Examiner Initials	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	U.S. Patent Document	Kind Code if known <sup>2</sup>	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD- YYYY	Pages, Columns Lines Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear

**FOREIGN DOCUMENTS**

Examiner Initials	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Foreign Patent Document Office <sup>3</sup> Number <sup>4</sup> Kind Code <sup>5</sup> (if known)	Country	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD-YY/Y	Pages, Columns Lines Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear

**Other Prior Art-Non Patent Literature Documents**

Examiner Initials	Cite No.	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), data, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, country, where published, source.	Applicant check here if English language translation attached
		DECISION OF REFUSAL MARCH 9, 2004	
Examiner Signature		Date Considered	

Examiner: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw a line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

<sup>1</sup>Unique citation designation number. <sup>2</sup>See attached Kinds of U.S. Patent Documents. <sup>3</sup>Enter Office that Issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). <sup>4</sup>For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. <sup>5</sup>Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.1.<sup>6</sup>if possible. <sup>\*</sup>Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.

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